

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

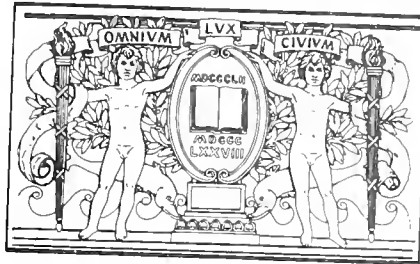


3 9999 06588 396 7

Δ
M3/B16 ✓

X

95 / 1



BOSTON
PUBLIC
LIBRARY



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2011 with funding from
Boston Public Library

<http://www.archive.org/details/bosnet00bost>

GOVDOC ✓

MS/B16
X
95/1

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS DEPARTMENT
RECEIVED

MAR 24 1995

132

nd.

GOVDOC L



1

City of Boston
Thomas M. Menino, Mayor
24 Hr. On-Line Information Service
635-DATA Via Modem



City of Boston

Thomas M. Menino, Mayor

Overview

BOSNET is the City of Boston's implementation of an "Electronic City Hall" and an initial building block of the City's contribution to the "information superhighway". Available 24 hours a day the BOSNET system is accessible via any modem-equipped personal computer and will provide users with information about different departments at City Hall and up coming city sponsored events without having, to require a personal visit to City Hall.

Anyone can use the system and users of the system will be given a personal access code and will have the option of communicating directly with the system or with one another. A weekly updated list of city sponsored events will let customers know what's happening in and around the city. And the system will also provide users with a City Hall directory, including, the names, addresses and phone numbers of managers at City Hall. Users of the systems will also have the capability of leaving, messages to any of the managers at City Hall.

Accessing, information about the different departments at City Hall will now be easier than ever and users of the system will be able to find out information about how to pay a parking, ticket, informational on inspection services, and information about the city's parks and recreational department. People seeking information about the disability office, neighborhood services, fair housing commission or dozens of other city agencies, who are a part of the BOSNET system, will be able to access the information they need.

To make sure that customers calling do not hear the sound of a busy signal or get stuck listening to voice mail, a total of four phone lines will be available for customers wanting to use the system and possibly in the future, as the system grows more phone lines will be added.

BOSNET is an out growth of Mayor Menino's directive to utilize information technology to directly service the constituency, who, as taxpayers are also the customers of City services. It serves as an information resource, as well as providing another avenue of communication between the people of the city and their government. As the system grows, a fully interactive system will evolve, fully networked to all City agencies and enabling quick individualized responses.

Accessing BOSNET

BOSNET has been specifically designed to encourage maximum participation. The technical requirements to utilize the system are inclusive of older, and relatively "low-tech" equipment installed in many homes as well as the newer, more advanced technology currently available.

Anybody with a modem-equipped personal computer may dial in to the BOSNET number, 635-DATA (635-3282) and questions about BOSNET system will be answered directly by the operations manager Hyun Yoo, (635- 4783). No account with BOSNET or any other on-line service is a prerequisite. Access to Internet is not required.

The modems on the BOSNET side support speeds up to 14.4 kbps and multiple error-correcting protocols. They will sense and auto-adjust to the capabilities of the modem dialing in.

On-Line

Once connected, the user will be asked to identify themselves and input a password chosen by themselves. This step is completely optional, but will be necessary if the

user wishes to have a private mailbox for responses from City personnel to their inquiries.

Once logged-on, the user will be greeted with any special announcements or events for the current week before they are presented with the Main Menu. From here, they may choose to browse the City Hall phone directory, send a message to a City official or agency, review a calendar of events or browse through a "How To" guide of City agencies and services. Users will also have the ability to communicate with one another.

A User will have the option of downloading certain information to their own computer for review off-line. For example, instructions on filing for a building permit, how to pay a parking ticket or getting a copy of a Police report.

The system is completely menu-driven for ease of use, and requires no computer knowledge beyond that required to operate one's own PC and modem.

Implementation Schedule

Phase One - August 1994. Dial-in access for the public. Ability to download files and send "one-way" messages.

Phase Two - December 1994. BOSNET integrated in City Hall fiber network enabling networked agencies to directly respond to electronic mail and monitor the activity on the system relevant to their area. Users may maintain private mailboxes and engage in truly interactive manner with City personnel. The option to receive a Fax in lieu of downloading the information. On-line applications available for various constituent service requirements.

Phase Three. Public access terminals located throughout the city. Access to selected city applications. Fee-based services on-line.

Other Public Information Services

The following on-line services are also currently available for public access:

Suffolk County Registry of Deeds. A fee-based document imaging and indexing system allowing on-line lookup of Registry of Deeds information concerning land and deed transactions. Users will have the ability to receive documents Faxed back.

Tax Bill Inquiry System. Provides automated database inquiries on property tax bills via touch-tone telephone.

Parking Clerk.

BOSNET BBS TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Server 486DX2, 66 MHz, Local BUS, 8 MB RAM
 1.2 gigabit SCSI 2 FAST hard disk
 NEC Multispin 3XE CD-ROM drive
 250 MegaByte tape backup

Communications (617)-635-DATA (3282), 8 line hunt
 8 port DigiBoard
 Practical Peripherals PM144MT 11(8)
 300 to 14400 bps
 V.42, LAP-M and MNP 2-4 Error Control
 V.42bis and MNP 5 Data Compression
 Group 3, 2, and I FAX

BBS Software PC Board, version 15.1

SysOp Hyun Yoo

FEEDBACK

Address Feedback to: Michael Hernon, Manager of Office Automation
Management and Information Systems
Room 703, Boston City Hall
Boston, Mass 02201

635-4783

Via: BOSNET mailbox
or
COMPUSERVE 72000,2733



CITY OF BOSTON • MASSACHUSETTS

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
THOMAS M. MENINO

To: ALL CONCERNED

From: The Office of Mayor Thomas Menino

Subject: BOSNET System

The office of Mayor Thomas Menino would like to announce the start of the BOSNET system, a new computer system, designed to strengthen the lines of communication between City Hall and our surrounding neighbors. Through the implementation of this system, people will have greater access to the various departments at City Hall. By calling from a computer people can now find out about any one of the city's offices and no longer will people have to travel and take time out of their personal schedules to come into downtown Boston. Which believe me, coming into the city can be stressful and time consuming. The people of Boston are too far removed from City Hall, it's time they got to know what we do here a little better and it is hoped through BOSNET, that goal can be accomplished.

Our goal with BOSNET is to strengthen the communication lines between city government, businesses and neighborhood residents. BOSNET will give callers access to departments at City Hall and provide them with the information on how those departments operate to better service them.



You know, City Hall after all should be a place where people feel comfortable going. No longer should people feel excluded from day to day but rather they should view City Hall as an institution that is at work for the people.

I as mayor of this city I have pledged from the very beginning to make myself and my administration accessible to the people of Boston. With your support we can make this program a success.



CITY HALL IS GOING " ELECTRONIC " AND A NEW SYSTEM KNOWN AS BOSNET IS MAKING IT EASIER FOR YOU TO GET THE INFORMATION ABOUT THE MANY DEPARTMENTS AT CITY HALL AND HOW THEY OPERATE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

For additional information contact:

Brendan McDonough 635- 4976

You may not be able to fight City Hall but now with the help of the BOSNET system you'll have greater access to it. The BOSNET system will provide users with comprehensive information about the many departments at City Hall and how they operate. The system is being called the " Electronic City Hall of the 90's".

No longer will people have to come into City Hall to find out information about specific departments and up-coming city sponsored events. Now with the help of the BOSNET 24 hour computer information system users can call-in and get the names, phone numbers and addresses of department managers and find out how the various City Hall departments operate. The BOSNET system is easy to operate and anyone with IBM systems with a modem hookup (or Apple systems that can translate IBM) can call in.

When users of the system call in they will first be asked to identify themselves and then chose a password selected by them. From there people can browse through a directory of the city hall managers complete with their names, addresses and phone numbers. Or users of the system will be able to find out what the departments at City Hall do, complete with the option of leaving messages for City Hall managers, if they chose. Some people don't know how to pay a parking ticket, get a copy of a police report or even where a department at City Hall is located. Through BOSNET they can find answers to their questions immediately. A new almost " Electronic City Hall," is yet another step by Mayor Menino and the city to bridge the gap between city government business and neighborhood residents.

As the BOSNET system grows and expands it is hoped that more phone lines will be added to the system and more people will call in and find out how the different departments at City Hall operate. Currently, the system is able to handle four incoming calls at once but as the system expands and grows that number could increase. Users of BOSNET will be able to find out about neighborhood services, information they may need about inspectional services, fair housing, human rights, disabilities information, and a number of other functions the city is capable of providing. Also, as the BOSNET system grows and expands it is hoped that users will have access to the system at a number of libraries and municipalities throughout the city. So go ahead give IS a call at 635-DATA and we'll let you know what's happening around the city.

The following is a current list of City Hall departments accessible by the BOSNET system:

- The Office of the Parking Clerk
- Inspectional Services
- Commission for Persons with Disabilities
- The Parks and Recreations Department
- Fair Housing Commission
- Human Rights Commission
- Neighborhood Services
- Public Works Department
- Registry of Deeds for Suffolk County

MEDIA PEOPLE TO CONTACT

LAWYERS WEEKLY

THE TAB NEWSPAPER

WORLD JOURNAL CHINESE DAILY- 423-3347

THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR

AIR TRAVEL JOURNAL 423-0900

BANKER AND TRADESMAN

GENERAL COMPUTING ASSOCIATION- 923-0417

PHYSICIANS NEWS DIGEST- 451-9070

THE BOSTON BUSINESS JOURNAL

THE BOSTON GLOBE

THE BOSTON HERALD

THE BOSTON PHOENIX

CHANNELS TO CONTACT

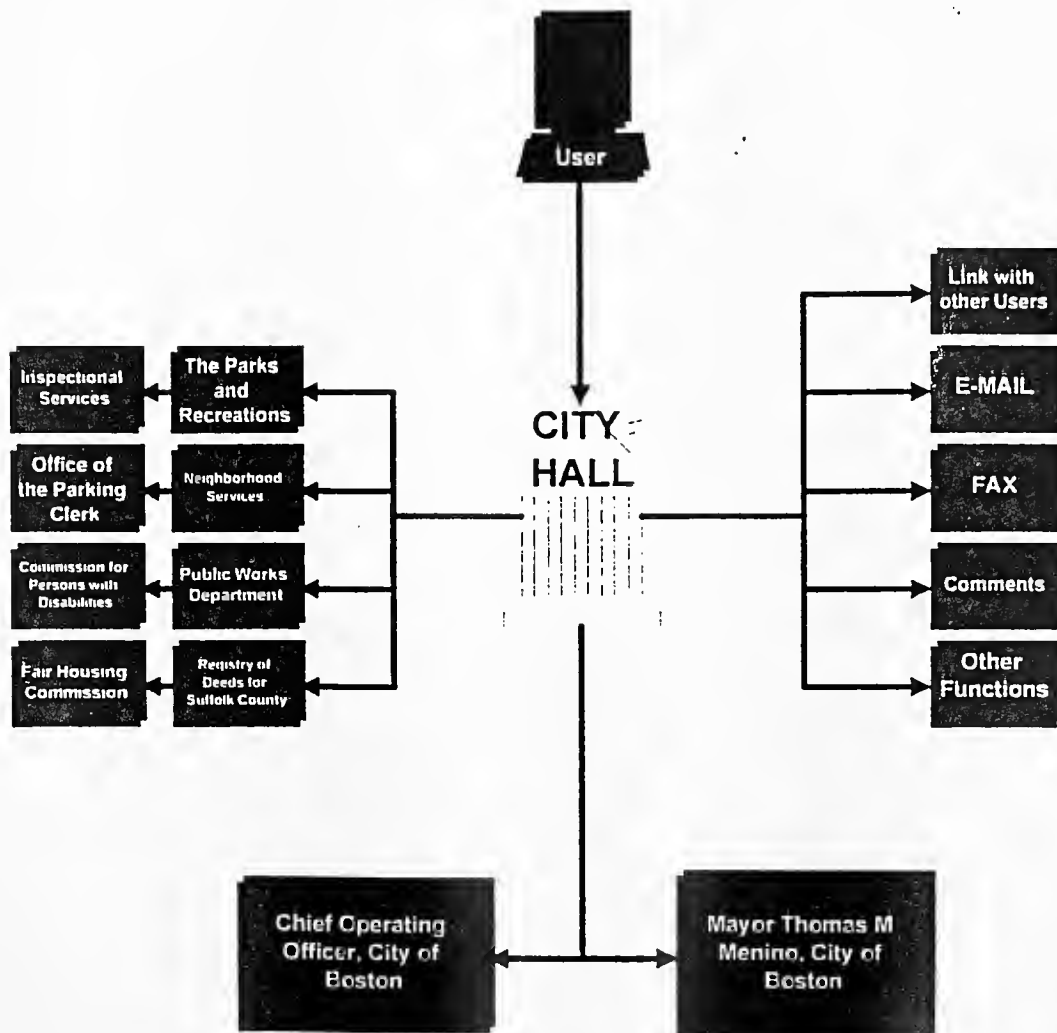
4,5,7,56, NEW ENGLAND CABLE NEWS, NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK NEWS, PUT
AND A

D ON THE MUNICIPAL CHANNEL

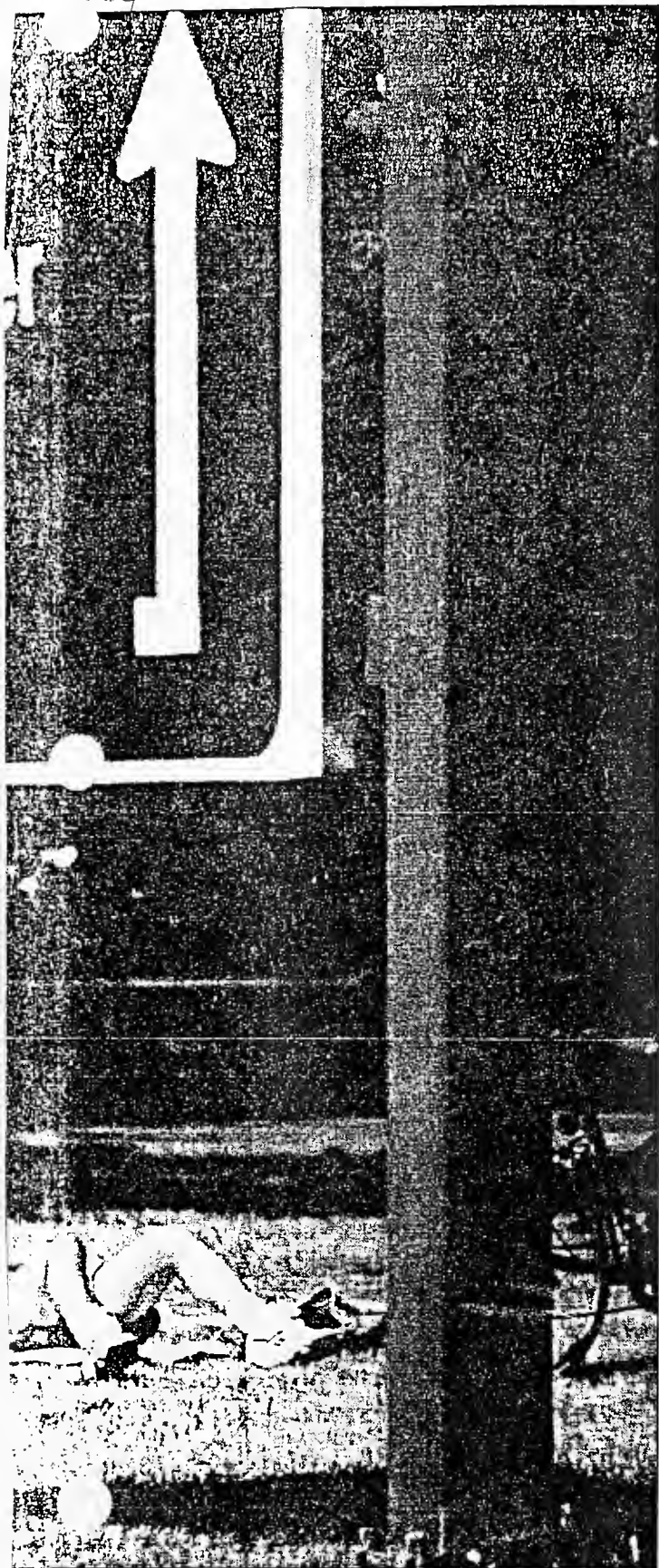
SEND OUT FLYERS

SEE IF WE CAN HAVE A CITY HALL DEPARTMENT PUT OUT FLYERS IN BILL
STATEMENTS OR THINGS THEY SEND OUT.

The BOSNET Network



CRISTEX
loop



GLOBE STAFF PHOTO / JIM DAVIS

breather beneath a traffic sign on the Memorial

Sied

*'This is the beginning for the city...
to be able to communicate with its
constituents in a different way.'*

ROBERT CIOLEK, Boston's chief operating officer

City Hall now on information superhighway

By Adrian Walker
GLOBE STAFF

The Menino administration is opening up a new entrance to the information superhighway at City Hall.

BOSNET, Boston's new information system, goes on-line today, according to city officials. Residents with home computers and a modem will now have easy access to myriad facts about city government, officials said yesterday.

With a few keystrokes, computer users will be able to send electronic letters to the mayor or to department heads. They also will be able to call up a City Hall phone directory or get information on such matters as how to pay parking tickets.

By the end of the year, as the system becomes truly interactive, computer aficionados will be able to receive electronic mail from City Hall personnel, officials said.

"This is the beginning for the city of Boston to be able to communicate with its constituents in a different way," said Robert Ciolek, Boston's chief operating officer. "This will build over time. Wherever there can be an interaction that is not necessary to come into City Hall, we'll be making those applications available."

Eventually, administration officials pledge, the long lines for everything from resident parking stickers to marriage licenses will become a thing of the past.

The first phase of the project will cost \$9,000.

Allan Stern, the chief of information services and City Hall's

computer guru, said the new initiative is right in line with Mayor Menino's aim to make city government more user-friendly.

"The mayor has mandated a lot of what gets done in city government needs to be made more usable for people," Stern said. A future step, he said, "is to be able to take most of the transactions of City Hall and roll them out into the neighborhoods ATM-style, so you won't have to come to City Hall to file a complaint or look up information."

Though proposals for computer links were floated during the later years of the Flynn administration, they were rejected.

When he was mayor, Raymond Flynn often said he preferred that citizens and bureaucrats deal with one another face-to-face, and he feared that computers would make city government more impersonal. Consequently, there were few expenditures for computer equipment for the city in recent years, officials said.

Stern said BOSNET, which can be accessed by dialing 635-DATA, will ultimately be used by vendors seeking to do business with the city, streamlining the lengthy process of awarding city contracts. He said improved technology will more than pay for itself in the long run.

"Whenever people don't have to go someplace physically to get something done, resources are not being expended," he said. "A lot of what we do is on paper, or reproducing paper. By doing it electronically, there's basically no expense."

